

In the Latter Days, the sun shall rise from the West (The Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa))



Universal teachings of the Holy Qur'an

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Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) and his
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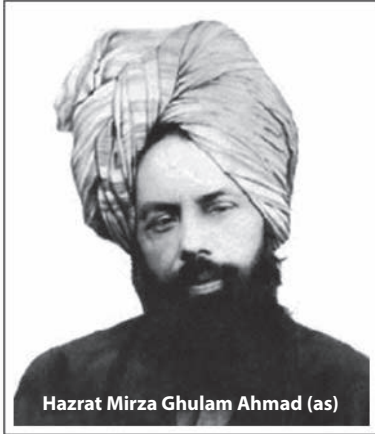
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The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as)



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY

United States of America

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organization, international in its scope, with branches in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Australia, and Europe. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was established in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) (1835-1908) in Qadian, a small and remote village in the Punjab province of India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days, the Awaited One of the world community of religions (the Mahdi and Messiah).

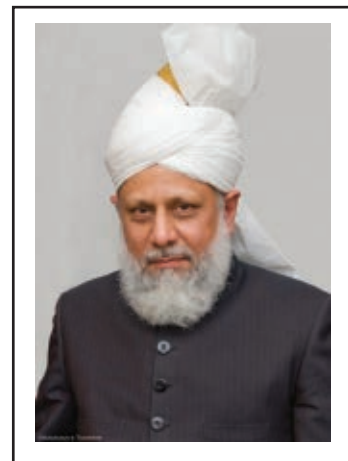
The Movement he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam: peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God in its pristine purity.

Hazrat Ahmad (as) proclaimed in the commentary of the Verse 6 of Chapter 98 of the Holy Qur'an: "[Islam] is the religion of the people of the right path." The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, diligently defends Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. It firmly believes in and acts upon the Qura'nic teaching:

"There is no compulsion in religion" (The Holy Qur'an: 2:257).

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community strongly rejects violence and terrorism in any form and for any reason.

The Community has been led by the elected successors of Hazrat Ahmad (as). The present Head of the Community, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, was elected in 2003. His official title is Khalifatul-Masih V or Fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah (as).



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad,
Khalifatul-Masih V (aba)

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Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (ra) was the first Ahmadi Muslim missionary to arrive in America in 1921. He founded the *Muslim Sunrise*, which stands today as the longest running Muslim publication in America. The magazine seeks to open discussions on Islam and topics relating to religion in general. It highlights the role of Islam in an ever-changing global society. It provides a platform for public opinion on contemporary issues and presents their solutions from an Islamic perspective.

The *Muslim Sunrise* welcomes letters to the Editor, questions, and submissions.

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Muslims follow the name of God's prophets with the prayer '*Alaihis-Salam* or '*may peace be upon him*,' and for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam* or '*may peace and blessings of God be upon him*.' Companions of prophets and righteous personalities who have passed away are saluted by *Radiyallahu 'Anhu/a* or '*may God be pleased with him/her*.' While such salutations sometimes are not set out in the text in order to facilitate reading, we encourage readers to offer these prayers as if set out in full.

Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

- sa: Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam
(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
- as: 'Alaihis-Salam (may peace be upon him)
- ra: Radiyallahu 'Anhu/'Anha (may Allah be pleased with him/her)
- rh: Rahimahullahu Ta'ala (may Allah shower His mercy on him)
- aba: Ayyadahullahu Ta'ala Bi-Nasrihil-'Aziz
(may Allah support him with His mighty help)

Verse numbers in the references from the Holy Qur'ān count Tasmiya at the beginning of a chapter as the first verse.

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FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

Allah is He Who raised up the heavens without any pillars that you can see. Then He settled Himself on the Throne. And He pressed the sun and the moon into service: each pursues its course until an appointed term. He regulates it all. He clearly explains the Signs, that you may have a firm belief in the meeting with your Lord.

The Holy Qur'an (13:3)

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمُوتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى
الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى يُدَبِّرُ
الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾

SAYING OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (sa)

The reward for reciting the Qur'an and acting upon the teachings in it

Narrated Abu Musa, the Prophet (sa) said: "A believer who recites the Qur'an and acts on it is like a citron which tastes nice and smells nice, and a believer who does not recite the Qur'an but acts on it is like a date that tastes good but has no smell, and the example of a hypocrite who recites the Qur'an is like a sweet basil which smells good but tastes bitter, and the example of a hypocrite who does not recite the Qur'an is like a colocynth which tastes bitter and has a bad smell."

Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No: 5059 (Book 66, Hadith 84)



EDITORIAL

JULY 2022

The wonderful wording of the Holy Qur'an is such that with the passage of time and changing circumstances it can easily be adapted according to alternate needs. The Holy Qur'an is in a living language, Arabic, and its text has been miraculously safeguarded throughout the ages since it was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa). On receiving the revealed verses, not only did he himself memorize them, he had scribes to whom he dictated the text he received. In addition, many of his sincere Companions and followers were enabled by God to memorize all the revealed verses.

The Holy Qur'an contains the doctrines, rules and regulations, and comprehensive teachings of Islam on how to live a morally upright and righteous life. The very first chapter of the Holy Qur'an, Al-Fatiha, teaches us how to pray and implore the Lord of the Universes to keep us on the straight path, the path of those on whom He has bestowed His favors and blessings. And who are those who earn the favors of God? The Holy Qur'an identifies them clearly: "they are the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous" (1).

The beginning of the second chapter of the Holy Qur'an offers a joyous and comprehensive declaration: "This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the righteous who believe in the Unseen, and observe the Prayer, and spend what We [God] have provided for them, and who believe in that has been revealed to you [Prophet Muhammad] and that which was revealed before you, and they have firm faith in the Hereafter. It is they who follow the guidance from their Lord, and it is they who shall prosper" (2).

Lack of space does not permit us to cover all aspects of the universal and eternal teachings of the Holy Qur'an; nevertheless, the few articles published in this issue of the Muslim Sunrise are of utmost importance in the ongoing quest to seek Divine guidance from the Holy Qur'an in our age and time.

Please, enjoy reading the articles, and give us your feedback.

Mubasher Ahmad
Editor in Chief



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IN THE WORDS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH(as)

Holy Qur'an Accords with Human Nature

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,
The Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as)

Of all the current revealed Books on earth, the Holy Qur'an is the only Book which is conclusively proven to be the Word of God. Its teachings for salvation are based entirely on truth and are in accordance with human nature. Its doctrines are so perfect and firm that strong proofs bear witness to their truth. Its commandments are based upon truth. Its teachings are free from every type of polytheism, innovation and worship of creatures. It is full of eagerness for the manifestation of the Unity of God and of Divine greatness and of the perfection of the Lord of Honor. It is replete throughout with the Unity of the Divine and does not tolerate any kind of deficiency or defect or unworthy attributes in the case of the Creator. It does not impose any doctrine by mere authority but sets down reasons for the truth of that which it teaches. It establishes every purpose with proofs and arguments. It sets forth reasons for the truth of every principle and carries the mind to perfect certainty and full understanding. It repels all evils that afflict people's doctrines, actions and words, and works with bright reasoning. It teaches good manners, the knowledge of which is necessary for every human being. It repels every corruption with as much force as that which inspires the corruption. Its teaching is straightforward and strong and secure, as if it were a mirror of the law of nature and is a true reflection of it. It is an enlightening sun for the insight of the heart. It expounds the details of the principles of reason and corrects its deficiencies.

Other books that are called revealed are in their present condition deprived of all these perfect qualities and contain many wrong conceptions with regard to the Being and attributes of the Divine. The followers of these books profess strange doctrines. Some of them deny God being the Creator and All-Powerful and set themselves up as His partners in being eternal and self-existent. Some set up idols and images and deities as partners with the Divine and managers of His kingdom. Some fashion sons and daughters and grandsons and grand-daughters for Him. Some worship Him in the form of an alligator or tortoise. In short, they run ahead of each other as if the Perfect Being is most unfortunate that He has not been able to attain the perfection which reason demanded for Him. When I discovered people involved in such false doctrines and



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian,
The Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as)

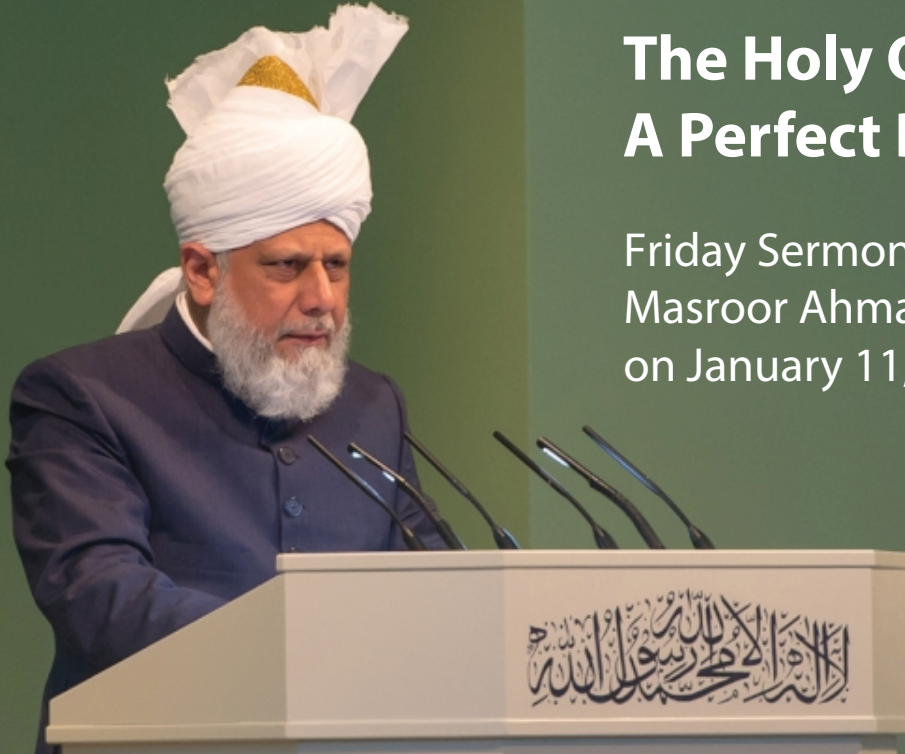
afflicted with so much error my heart trembled and melted and I felt it a bounden duty and obligation to write this book for their guidance, which I shall fully discharge (1).

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The Holy Qur'an, A Perfect Book

Friday Sermon delivered by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba) on January 11, 2008 (1)



[Prepared by 'The Review of Religions']

In the Friday Sermon delivered on January 11, 2008, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), continued with his discourse on verse 130 of Surah Al-Baqarah, its translation reads: "And, Our Lord, raise among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise" (2).

This was a prayer of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) in which he prayed to God for a great prophet who would perform four undertakings. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said he had already expounded on the first of these undertakings, i.e., "recitation" of the Book in his previous sermon, that recitation did not simply entail the varied Ayahs (Signs) were to be read.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said indeed, verse 4 of Surah Al-Maidah (3) is a sign of the fulfillment of the prayer (4) of Hazrat Ibrahim (as).

Allah has also promised to safeguard the Holy Qur'an (5) through which His final religious teaching was revealed. Indeed, the message of the Book was protected during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (sa) via the various Companions who committed it to memory and the scribes who wrote it down on the instructions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa).

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said Dajjal is hatching plans to bring changes to this Book, but it will never be successful. In 1999 some Evangelical Christian churches in the USA published a "new" version of the Qur'an and called it "Furqan-ul-Haq," devising their

verses in preparing the Muslims for the second coming of the Messiah.

Some hypocritical Muslims also make attempts against "Shariah." They wish to take out the Qur'anic verses about fighting for the cause of Allah. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said this was the height of cowardice and attempted to appease the Christians and create discord between the Muslims. Whoever may be behind this attempt will never succeed; they have a very restricted insight and wish to change the Qur'an in the way the Bible was interpolated. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), added there was no Divine promise to guard the original text of the Bible.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said the prayer of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) had been fulfilled, and the whole world has witnessed this. God has perfected religion in the faith of Islam, and it was given to one who was the Seal of all the Prophets; now, no new religious law (Shariah) will come, and neither will any Prophet come apart from in complete subservience to the Prophet of Islam (sa). Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said the hostility indeed to Islam was also predicted and prophesied because Allah willed to declare that He is All-Knowing and All-Aware.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said those Muslims who feel unsure or shy about some of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an should seek perception from the words of the Imam of the age, i.e., Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as).

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said the teaching of the Holy Qur'an is clear, and it has obligations and commandments, some of which are on an individual level and some on a communal level. The commandments change with the prevailing situation. Some Muslims feel shy or uncomfortable about the communal and the national teachings, such as those on Jihad and warfare and want to change these teachings to please the West. The first fact they need to realize is that the history of these countries is filled with unjust wars. Even in these times, many of these countries have controlled other countries unfairly, and there is a continued state of war. So the true and real Muslims should try to put these foreign critics to shame rather than being shy themselves. They should point out the contradiction in their actions and speech.

Furthermore, when the Holy Qur'an commands fighting in the situation of war, many conditions are attached to it, i.e., only to fight back when one is attacked or persecuted. This is backed up with numerous commandments of fair play if there is to be fighting. Indeed the "judge" of the current age (the Promised Messiah and Mahdi) has ruled that with his advent fighting for religion is abrogated, and only those tactics need be employed that the opponents are using, i.e., defend your faith with the written word. Now the Jihad is to be of the pen and knowledge, not of the sword or force, and neither did the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) or his Companions ever infer this from the word Jihad. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), added if Jihad is allowed in the shape of fighting, it is when a country attacks another country and is not to be "fought" by "organizations."

Next, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), read out brief extracts from the writings of Western scholars like John Barton, Sir. H. A. R. Gibb, Sir William Muir, and Maurice Bucaille, etc., to verify that the original text of the Holy Qur'an, as revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa), remains unaltered.



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), read from the august writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as):

"This is the Perfect Book. That is to say, a grand and sublime Book that derives from Divine knowledge. It is established that its source and spring is the Eternal Being of the All-Wise. Therefore, by referring to it as The Book, God Almighty has indicated that this Book derives from the knowledge of that Being with high attributes, Who is Matchless and Peerless and Whose perfect knowledge and minute mysteries are very far from the limits of human sight.

Then it is said that the body of the Qur'an is so well reasoned that there is no room left in it for any doubt, meaning that, like other books, it is not a mere tale or story but is comprehensive of conclusive arguments and reasoning, and sets forth clear proofs of its objects and purposes, and is in itself a miracle which operates like a sharp sword for the removal of doubts and suspicions, and does not leave the matter of the recognition of God at the conjectural stage of He should be, but carries the matter to the certainty of, He is.

Despite the grandeur of these purposes, which are greatly concerned with effect and reform, it proceeds to define the fourth purpose, which is its ultimate object, which is the provision of guidance for the righteous. It announces that this Book has been revealed for the guidance of those who, on account of their pure interiors, sane reason, firm intelligence, eagerness for the search for truth, and right motives, would, in the end, arrive at a high degree of faith and recognition of God and perfect righteousness. In other words, those about whom God knows that their nature is suited to this guidance and they can make progress in true insights will, in the end, be guided by this Book; and this Book would reach them, and God would enable them to follow the right path before their death. Thus, God Almighty has clearly stated that those who in the knowledge of God are worthy of being guided and possess the quality of righteousness by their nature will surely be guided through the Holy Qur'an" (6).

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), said if the sources of Dajjal are trying to change or alter the Holy Qur'an, they will meet a tragic end, and they will never succeed in their attempts. But, at the same time, those pure of heart will experience revolutionary changes.

Next, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), read out another lengthy and profound extract from the book of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as), "Jung-e-Muqqadus" (The Holy War) in which he argues the excellence of a sacred Book with references to the Qur'anic verses of Surah Ibrahim (7). He stated that the

first sign of a Sacred Book depends on its principles of faith, is well-established and sublime, and can be accepted by human nature. The second sign is that its verity should be unfolded to those people who reflect and ponder over nature. The third sign should be that it should bear fruit for all time. The Promised Messiah (as) further elucidates that the third sign of eternal bearing of fruit signifies God's acceptance and miracles, as stated in verses of Surah Ha Mim Al-Sajdah (8). The Promised Messiah (as) also expounds on the beauty of the moderate teaching of the Holy Qur'an in comparison to the severity of the teaching of Moses (as) and the leniency of the teaching of Jesus (as) by citing verse 42 of Surah Al-Shura (9). This teaching is further enhanced by verse 91 of Surah Al-Nahl (10) regarding treating others with grace and how one would treat one's nearest and dearest.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul-Masih V (aba), concluded that this beautiful teaching was revealed to a great Prophet (sa), who then gave it to us. Therefore, may Almighty Allah grant us the capacity to understand it, implement it in our lives, and spread it in the world.

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Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) and his Knowledge of the Holy Qur'an

Dr. Hiba Tul-Waheed Ghani

Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "This is a book which we have revealed to thee that thou mayest bring mankind out of darkness into light by the command of their Lord to the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy" (1). Almighty God has revealed Islam as His final religion on this earth and the Holy Qur'an as His final word, which can never be altered; He has

taken the responsibility of its protection. However, over time, believers started to forget the true teachings of this magnificent scripture and acquired misleading habits and traditions. Muslims believed in Islam as the final religion; however, they could not defend it effectively in response to any criticism. Islam was being attacked, and verses of the Holy Qur'an were questioned. Although prophecies of Prophet Mohammed (sa) were being fulfilled, this was an era when faith had left the Muslim Ummah (nation) as warned by the Holy Prophet (sa). The Holy Qur'an, the source of Divine light to the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy- was being used merely for some rituals and traditions. The Muslim Ummah was devoid of true understanding and knowledge of the Holy Qur'an. There was a dire need for a reformer. This was the time of the Advent of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as).

Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad (ra), the second successor to the Promised Messiah (as), explains the significance of this advent in light of the Reformer's (as) meticulous study and knowledge of the Holy Qur'an: "We learn from the Qur'an that as in the material universe the moon obtains light from the sun and illumines the earth when the light of the sun is not directly available, in the same way men will continue to appear who will obtain spiritual light from the Holy Prophet and will continue to illumine the spiritual universe. These men, in accordance with the degree of the need which they are designed to fulfil, will appear in the shape of Reformers, but in the case of widespread disorder and mischief in the spiritual realm would be appointed as Prophets subordinate, and in strict obedience, to the Holy Prophet" (2).

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, revived the fundamental teaching of the Unity of Allah (Tauheed) and explained that peace and salvation could only be achieved through nearness and reliance on God. His advent shattered many idols and discarded falsehood, injustice, and immorality. He proposed emphatically and fervently that nearness to Allah could only be achieved by following and understanding the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, which is the "perfect book; there is no doubt in it; it is guidance for the righteous" (3). He had a deep and profound love for the Holy Qur'an. His love for the Holy Qur'an and his immense knowledge of it stems from his love for his Creator, his Allah.

He started to manifest his love for the word of Allah at a very young age. He would spend hours focusing on and delving into the deeper meaning of the verses of the Holy Qur'an. As a young man, he was often found in solitude, fervently praying to God Almighty to help him understand and learn from

this Divine scripture. From this knowledge and deep understanding of this Divine source, he was enabled to not only defend Islam verbally and in writing against its fierce opponents but also to become the rightly guided one. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) wrote over eighty books and countless speeches and articles defending the religion of Islam. Every magnificent piece of his writing was enhanced by continued excogitation and meditation based on the comprehensive knowledge he acquired from this Holy Book.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) explained that the Holy Qur'an not only steers the seeker in the search for spiritual advancement but also provides complete guidance in all matters. He states, "There is no verity that it does not mention and no misguided sect that it does not counter. And what a wonder it is that it does not contain a single sentence that is unnecessary, any statement out of place, or a single word of frivolity. Notwithstanding due regard to all these matters, it has displayed such a degree of fluency — more than which cannot be imagined. It has raised eloquence to the highest level of perfection by encompassing all past and future knowledge within a small book, by virtue of an excellent arrangement, brevity, and a closely reasoned discourse, so that man—whose life is short and whose works are many—may be relieved of many a headache, and so that its eloquence may benefit Islam in the dissemination of its doctrines, and it may be easy to memorize and remember it" (4).

Through his inclusive knowledge of the Qur'an, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), also removed the misconception that Allah Almighty has stopped conversing with man; instead, he clarified that God continues to speak to His creation. The most glorious conversation that God Almighty has had is with His Holy Prophet in the form of the Holy Qur'an, and that is why Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as), emphasized the need to acquire guidance from this Divine source of wisdom and success. He (as) says: "I tell you truly that if souls are charged with true seeking and hearts develop true thirst, people would search for that way and would seek that path. How can that way be discovered, and how can the intervening veil be removed? I assure all seekers that it is Islam alone which conveys the good news of that path. All other people have since long sealed up divine revelation. Be sure, however, that this seal is not imposed by God, but is an excuse that is put forward by man on account of his privation. Be sure that as it is not possible that we should be able to see without eyes, or should be able to hear without ears, or should be able to speak without a tongue, in the same way it is not possible that without the help of the Qur'an we should be able to behold the countenance of the True Beloved. I was young and am now old but I

have not encountered anyone who has quaffed the cup of this visible understanding except out of this holy fountain" (5).

While describing the supremacy and excellence of the Holy Qur'an, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as), refers to it as a "miracle" and "Khatam-ul-Kutub" [the last Book] since it was revealed to the Prophet, who is Khatam-un-Nabiyyin [last of the law-bearing prophets]. Just as the status of excellence and perfection is the highest possible for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa), the excellence and perfection of the Book revealed unto him must also be the highest possible. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) states: "The higher the resolve and determination and the purpose of the speaker, the same will be the case with his speech. Divine revelation also follows the same rule. The higher the resolve of the person to whom Divine revelation is vouchsafed, the higher will be the character of the revelation. As the circle of the resolve, capacity and determination of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] was very wide, the revelation that came to him had the same high rank. No one else will ever attain the same degree of resolve and courage inasmuch as his message was not for any limited time or for any particular people, as was the case with the Prophets before him" (6).

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), expounded upon the bounties and wonders of the Holy Qur'an that are experienced by its sincere followers who faithfully make every effort to acquire deeper knowledge of and abide by the teachings of this Holy Book. He taught us that the wonders of the Holy Qur'an include trust in Allah, love for Allah, wisdom, logical reasoning, a better understanding of all matters, sinlessness or Divine protection, and high moral qualities such as kindness, generosity, compassion, sacrifice, and forbearance. These are fortunate people who not only attain nearness to God but also start reflecting on these high qualities bestowed upon them by Allah. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) says: "This seed develops into perfection purely for the sake of God only in those people who are devoted wholly to God and whose souls are filled by God with His own pure qualities, as they are empty of everything beside God. He makes those high qualities as dear to their hearts as they are dear to Him. Through their devotion, they acquire such a high rank of adorning themselves with Divine qualities that they become an instrument in the hands of God through which He manifests His own qualities" (7).

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) studied and explained the living teachings of this Holy Book in the greatest detail and unveiled the radiance of these perfect teachings through the reasoning that was divinely granted to him by Allah Almighty.

With inspiring conviction and through logical arguments, he proved that the only living Book on earth is the Holy Qur'an and that it is here to guide us until the end of time. He showed that this Book contains immense and deep-rooted virtues that can be learned and acquired by ordinary but righteous human beings to become chosen people of the Creator. He refers to these precious teachings of the Holy Qur'an as "pearls" in several publications. He explained that the Holy Qur'an is such an authentic and pure remedy for all problems that he referred to it as the "elixir of life" multiple times. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) strove incessantly under Divine guidance to increase and perfect his knowledge of the Qur'an and to bring forth these authentic and pure gems of the Holy Qur'an from which flow oceans of wisdom, rationality, and peace that nurture one's soul and lead it to ultimate success and salvation. His service to the Holy Qur'an is a treasure for mankind. The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) encapsulates his love for the Holy Qur'an succinctly in one of his Urdu poems: "The Beauty of the Holy Qur'an" (8) in these words:

**The grace and beauty of the Qur'an
Is the light and life of every Muslim;
The moon is the beloved of others,
Our beloved is the Qur'an.
I searched everywhere,
Its peer could not be found;
Why, after all, should it not be unique:
How can the word of man
Equal the world of God?
There is divine power; here is helplessness;
The difference is so obvious!**

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The Holy Qur'an's Invitation to Worship One God

Shazia Sohail

Imagine a world with no hunger or homelessness, where you never feel the need to lock your doors, where the buyer wants to pay more than the seller wants to charge, where the lion and the lamb drink from the same pond, i.e., the strong and the weak have equal access to justice. Where at night, the king roams the poorest neighborhoods to understand the needs of his people. Then, imagine the spiritual bliss of the people making this world possible. The Holy Qur'an invites us to such a world (1-5).

The Qur'an posits the 'worship' of God as the purpose of humankind's creation. In it lies the solution to all humankind's problems, whether individual or collective. In the Qur'an, there are about 700 commandments whose observance constitutes acts of worship. Humankind is invited to live a life in pursuit of high morals, fulfilling the rights of one's environment by restoring justice, kindness, and compassion to attain nearness to God Almighty. This blueprint for human beings to thrive and prosper is in accord with their nature.

Purpose of Creation

God Almighty categorically denies creating the universe with no lofty purpose in mind; His worship is that purpose. The keyword here is worship, or actions taken to attain nearness to, or approval of, God. Islam presents a God full of mercy guiding us on a path that would allow us to realize our full potential and safeguard us from falling into error, much like a mother would do for her child. Just as one would need to discipline oneself and observe a strict regimen to attain physical strength, so would one need to progressively improve one's regimen of worship to achieve moral and spiritual excellence. As the framework of self-discipline is perfected, one becomes more able to fulfill the rights of humankind and all God's creatures. The ultimate goal is to attain a soul as tender and merciful toward others as a mother is toward her child. We cannot change the condition of our soul merely by thinking it, as we do not have voluntary control over it. We can, however, put to test the claim of the Holy Qur'an that only through acts of worship can we attain a compassionate soul and be at peace with fellow beings (6-10).

Worship Explained

Worship is actions taken to please God; these are done to fulfill God's rights and fulfill the rights of humankind. The former informs our spirituality, the latter our morality. Both need to be fostered simultaneously for limitless progress in each. There are around 700 commandments in the Holy Qur'an that cover every aspect of human life. These range from injunctions to harness one's natural impulses, addressing a believer to refuse to indulge in or even believe in gossip, and addressing highly advanced beings who stand in prayer all night out of gratitude to their Lord. It is no wonder that in 23 years, heartless and cruel individuals were transformed into saints who constantly sought forgiveness from their Lord. Modern civilization, as it stands today with its cognizance of human rights, freedom of religion, separation of church and state, equality, women's rights, scientific progress, democracy, contract law, due process, rule of law, conduct during and after war, treatment of prisoners, abolition of slavery, etc., owes a debt of gratitude to the Holy Qur'an. These values exercised in the spirit of observing absolute justice, even though secular in nature, are posed as actions emanating from moral excellence and constitute worship of the Gracious God (11-26).

At least a third of the Qur'an enjoins one to reflect on the natural phenomenon to recognize God, leading to the creation of institutions of higher learning that subsequently became grounds for scientific discoveries. Respect for knowledge made them preserve all accessible knowledge, mainly in Greek and Latin, by translating it into Arabic. Christopher Columbus' journey to the Americas was made possible by learning from his Muslim compatriots that the earth was round and he would not fall off the face of the earth if he attempted to cross the Atlantic (27, 28).

The right to inherit and own property, initiate divorce, child support, alimony, etc., have been codified in the Holy Qur'an. Spiritual and intellectual equality of the genders has been established by stating that all humankind was created from a single soul. The status of women is further raised by placing paradise squarely under a mother's feet and requiring all believers, men, and women to cultivate the selflessness of a mother. Peace in the home is assured by making men the guardians of women's rights (29-36).

Freedom of conscience and religion has been defined as the principal right of all human beings. The God presented by the Holy Qur'an does not just tolerate people of other faiths but rather assures them of salvation if they follow it honestly. Protection of their places of worship is a responsibility of Muslims. Minorities are given equal rights and access to justice (37-39).

Closeness to God

Each commandment in the Holy Qur'an serves as a means of attaining nearness to God. When you give precedence to the rights of another over your own, you will find your own rights being fulfilled. For example, it is a common experience that our affairs will start to fall into place if we attend to our parents' needs before our own. When we act upon these commandments mindfully, we start seeing signs that we know are not mere coincidences in our daily lives. An internal dialogue with God begins to occur, and the signs propel us to advance joyfully in fulfilling His commandments and drawing closer to Him. Apparent setbacks are seen as nothing more than a test of one's faith and lead to a heightened sense of closeness, which is the goal of one's creation to begin with.

Pursuit of High Morals

One can constantly be in a state of worship by living a moral life. Morality comprises, but is not limited to, chastity, integrity, peaceful behavior, courtesy, forbearance, forgiveness, equity, benevolence, graciousness, courage, truthfulness, steadfastness, and sympathy for humankind; all practiced intentionally to please God. Great merit is also attached to charity (voluntary giving) as a means to ward off one's own hardship. And what response could be more appropriate to all the faculties and means of subsistence and progress one has been given than gratitude to the Gracious God? One's heart swells with further gratitude when told, *"If you are grateful, I will surely bestow more favors on you"* (40).

**WHEN YOU GIVE
PRECEDENCE
TO THE
RIGHTS
OF ANOTHER
OVER YOUR OWN,
YOU WILL FIND
YOUR OWN RIGHTS
BEING FULFILLED**

Soul at Rest

The chemical composition of coal is identical to that of a diamond, but diamond molecules are stacked neatly in an orderly manner, and coal molecules are randomly stacked. The merit is not in the molecule but in its placement. Similarly, merit lies in the appropriate use of moral values, with a keen consciousness to do right by everyone. For example, if forgiveness leads to greater transgression, then it is not a moral act. As our actions start to fall into place, we become worthy of God's special grace and only find comfort and delight in Him. *"In this condition, one is bestowed the heavenly life in this very world in return for one's perfect sincerity, purity, and faithfulness. Arriving at this stage, one realizes that the worship that was prescribed is in truth the food that nurtures one's soul".* The Holy Qur'an refers to this state as the Soul at Rest. Only such souls can bring about change (41-43).

Human Nature

Fulfilling the commandments in the Holy Qur'an resonates with human nature (44). I have never seen a self-help book or attended a motivational seminar where the principles introduced to help individuals progress have not been clearly outlined in the Holy Qur'an. Often these principles are presented as having nothing to do with religion, establishing that human beings intrinsically know that the commandments of God are good for them. Just as thirst is proof of the existence of water, so is the need to do the good proof of the existence of God.

Change is Needed

Now again imagine everything mentioned at the outset. In its earliest days, Islam did establish a society where blissful souls considered no sacrifice too big to please their Lord. Enslaved people were given so many rights that it became easier to free them, with adequate provisions, than to keep them. Women, who previously were the property of men and were inherited by the heirs of their husbands, gained the right to inherit and own property themselves. The birth of a girl had been considered so dishonorable that some fathers even buried their infant daughters alive to demonstrate false pride. These same daughters were declared to be the means to attain the highest ranks in paradise through excellent treatment. When the commandment forbidding alcohol was received, hardened drunkards shattered their barrels.

The change brought about in a mere 23 years was revolutionary. With the current deterioration in human sympathy, the world requires a moral and spiritual rebirth. The Holy Qur'an invites us to it through the worship of One God.

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The Holy Qur'an: Guidance for the Seekers of Truth

Dr. Muhammad Abdul Khaliq

Muslims are required to believe in all the Holy Books revealed to all Prophets of God which were meant for specific regions, specific peoples, and specific times. Many of these books e.g. the Bible have been changed to meet the changing times and needs of the people by the innovation of religious leaders. The Holy Qur'an is the Book revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) over 1,400 years ago, which contains the final perfect law for humanity. The language of the Qur'an is Arabic. It is an unabrogated compilation of the verbal revelations given to the Holy Prophet (sa) over a period of twenty-three years.

The name of the final Book, the Qur'an, was given by God; it means the Book that is meant to be read, and it has the message meant to be conveyed and delivered to all people of the world. The Holy Qur'an has universal teachings that cover every aspect of human life, ranging from God's attributes and man's relationship with God, historical accounts of previous prophets and peoples, and comprehensive religious philosophy to social, economic, and scientific facts; in brief, it provides a rational study.

It is the most widely read, recited, embraced, and published Book in the world, and unlike other Holy Books, it has remained unchanged over the past 1,443 years. God says in the Holy Qur'an that He Himself will guard this Book: "Verily, it is We Who have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We are its Guardian" (1). The Holy Qur'an claims in its pages that it is the perfect Book: "This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the righteous" (2). The teachings contained in the words of the Holy Qur'an continue to reverberate in the hearts of the believers, and the spiritual light believers are attaining continues to shine on in the hearts of believers and will provide guidance to seekers of truth for centuries to come.

Seeking Guidance from the Holy Qur'an:

The Holy Qur'an is the Book of qualities, morals, glorifying God, the Creator and Master of the universe, realizing that His omnipotence, and purifying oneself to attain a higher spiritual station, are the key determining factors to seek guidance from the glorious Holy Qur'an. One becomes nearer to Him and will start receiving guidance from the Holy Qur'an upon reading, studying, and pondering upon it. In the Holy Qur'an, God has explained that the Qur'an guides only those whose hearts are

humble, submissive, and receptive to being guided: "Therein, verily, is a reminder for him who has an understanding heart, or, who gives ear and is attentive" (3).

The Holy Qur'an not only offers discourses about the Muslims but also about non-Islamic societies, idol worshippers, the people of the Book, Jews or tribes of Israel, and the Christians, therefore, sending a universal message to every human being. God says in the Holy Qur'an about the People of the Book: "Say, 'O People of the Book! Come to a word equal between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for Lords beside Allah.' But if they turn away, then say, 'Bear witness that we have submitted to God'" (4). In these verses, God addresses different people, guiding them to the right path, showing that the most gracious Book is guiding us all.

The Holy Qur'an addresses societal issues relating to human interaction-, the etiquette of dealing with elders and parents, a system of justice, keeping peace in the world, the sanctity of humanity, family and marriage laws, just to name a few, all are discussed in detail as guidance for the society. The economic system is expounded upon, particularly about usury, which is the root cause of widening the gap between the rich and the poor. The duties of rulers and their responsibilities described in the Holy Qur'an can root out most of the problems we are seeing in countries around the world. This Book has revealed every eternal religious truth plainly stated, and this perfect statement might prove the means of guidance and mercy for those who submit wholly to God. God says in the Holy Qur'an: "And We have sent down to thee the Book to explain everything, and guidance, and a mercy, and glad tidings to those who submit to God" (5).

The Holy Qur'an's comprehensive unlimited eternal truth and insight is stated as follows: "Say, 'If every ocean becomes ink for the words of my Lord, surely, the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like thereof as further help'" (6). This verse supports the whole of creation in the words of God, i.e., the qualities of creation are without limit and endless. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as) wrote: "The clear miracle of the Holy Qur'an which can manifest itself to every people and by presenting which we can silence everyone, whether an Indian,

Persian, European or American, is the unlimited treasury of insights, eternal truths, and wisdom, which are expounded in every age according to its need and stand as armed soldiers to refute the thinking of every age. If the Holy Qur'an had been limited in its eternal truths and insights, it would not have amounted to a perfect miracle. The beauty of composition is not a matter of the miraculous nature that can be appreciated by every literate and illiterate person. The clear miracle of the Holy Qur'an is the unlimited insights and fine points that it comprises" (7).

The Holy Qur'an and study of nature:

God says: "Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies God; and He is the Mighty, the Wise" (8). The creation of humanity is described clearly in the Holy Qur'an stage by stage, as proved by modern-day medical research spawned over years of scientists' research. God says: "Verily, We created man from an extract of clay; Then We placed him as a drop of sperm in a safe depository; Then We fashioned the sperm into a clot; then We fashioned the clot into a shapeless lump; then We fashioned bones out of this shapeless lump, then We clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed it into another creation. So blessed be God, the Best of creators" (9). One needs to simply study, ponder over, and understand the Holy Qur'an to realize that the life around us and the heavens above us were created without flaw by the Best of Creators. There are verses in the Holy Qur'an relating to laws of nature describing cosmology, physics, and biology; God says: "Do they not then look at the camel. How it is created? And at the heaven, how it is raised high? And the mountains, how they are set up? And at the earth, how it is spread out" (10). Pondering over, thinking about, reflecting upon, arguing over, and understanding the meanings of the verses of the Holy Qur'an is the key to seeking guidance to reach the truth. Humans are invited to reflect upon the wonders of creation and numerous natural phenomena and see how the obvious intention is to stress Divine Omnipotence. God says: "Then He turned to the heaven while it was like something like smoke and said to it and to the earth: 'Come ye both of you, willingly or unwillingly.' They said, 'We come willingly'" (11). There is a reference to the creation of the universe (Big Bang theory); God says: "Do not the disbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were a closed-up mass, then We opened them out?" (12). The Big Bang theory states that around 12-15 billion years ago, the universe came into existence from one single extremely hot and dense point; due to an explosion of this point, the universe came into being. In the verse just cited, while acknowledging that God Knows the best, it remains astounding that the Qur'an had already revealed that "the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them."

God says about the expansion of the universe: "And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander" (13). The discovery of galaxies moving away from each other



means that the universe is expanding overall. There are verses of the Holy Qur'an mentioning atoms, orbits, elementary particles, stars, planets, the age of the universe, and how the whole universe will be wrapped around to a point, i.e., referring to the great calamity. In brief, the enlightenment one can get in seeking the truth is unmatched with any otherworldly source. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as), described in his writings about the Holy Qur'an: "The matchlessness of the Holy Qur'an is so patent and obvious in the estimation of seekers after truth that, like the sun, it spreads its rays in all directions and there is no doubt or difficulty in knowing and understanding it. This perfect light can be seen even with minimal attention, provided the darkness of prejudice and ill-will does not block it" (14).

The Holy Qur'an is a blessing for humanity, guiding us to live a righteous life with goodwill and love for each other and to create peace and harmony in the world. May God guide and help us to understand this treasure and uphold our position to serve humanity without any prejudices as we spread the teachings of the Holy Qur'an to our fellow humans.

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Was the Holy Qur'an perfectly preserved?(1)

Farhan Iqbal

Among the ancient books available today, scholars agree that the New Testament is the most well-attested book. What that means is that there are more manuscripts for the New Testament than any other book from antiquity. There are thousands of manuscripts, partial or complete, both in the original Greek language in which these were written and in the form of translations in Latin, Ethiopic, Slavic, and Armenian. As a leading New Testament scholar Dr. Bruce Metzger proudly puts it, the book which is the runner-up next to the New Testament in terms of manuscript testimony is Homer's Iliad with fewer than 650 Greek manuscripts (2). However, when it comes to the preservation of ancient texts, scholars have pointed out differences between these numerous manuscripts which makes it difficult to know without a shadow of a doubt what the original words were.

By comparison, the Holy Qur'an is the only ancient book that is pristinely preserved throughout the last 1,400 years; this can be ascertained from clear evidence and by taking a closer look at how the Qur'an was originally revealed and preserved since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (sa). Critics of Islam have made many objections to the assertion by Muslims that the Qur'an is perfectly preserved. It is alleged, for instance, that there are different "versions" of the Qur'an, and doubts are expressed regarding the motives of Hazrat Uthman (ra) (the third Khalifa (successor) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa)) when he burned certain manuscripts of the Qur'an in favor of the official one. In light of this, it is important to first understand what methods were used for the preservation of the Qur'an.

Methods of Preservation of the Qur'an

Since the beginning of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, much care was taken to ensure that it would be recorded with 100% accuracy. God Himself gave a promise in the form of a prophecy that He will safeguard the revelation of the Qur'an from any kind of impurities. He says: "Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely, We will be its Guardian." (3)

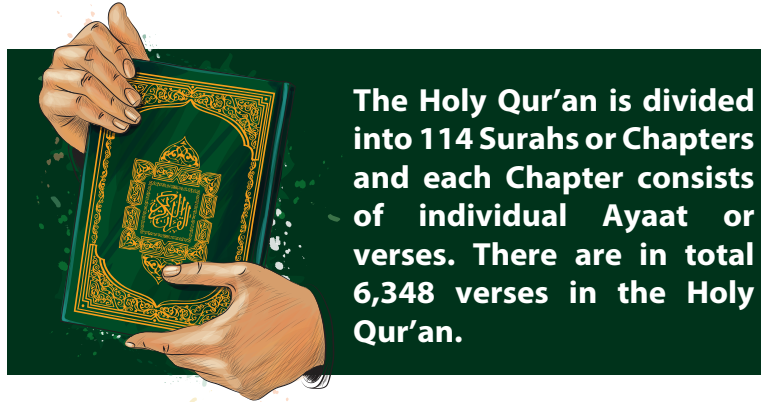
In the commentary of the above verse in Tafsir Kabir [The Great Commentary], Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (ra) (second successor of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as)) notes that it is not a coincidence that the Qur'an has been preserved since its revelation. In fact, its

preservation is hinted at in the words Al-Kitab and Qur'an. This means that it was preserved in two ways. First, it was written down from the very beginning, and second, it has been memorized by people in full since its very first revelation (4). Other than this, he notes other factors that contributed to the preservation of the Qur'an:

1. God ensured that such people exist who are able to memorize the Qur'an cover to cover.
2. The rhythm of the Qur'an is very sweet and easy, enabling anyone to memorize it, fully or in parts, without difficulty.
3. The recitation of the Qur'an was made obligatory in Salat, the 5 daily prayers, helping to preserve it.
4. God created love in the hearts of the people to recite it regularly.
5. God ensured that the Holy Qur'an spread throughout the world without undue delay after its revelation, making it impossible for any group or government to make changes or amendments.
6. Various kinds of knowledge in Islam are based on the Qur'an, causing the Qur'an to be quoted in a variety of books related to different fields of study. Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Musleh Mau'ud (ra) says that in his opinion, if the quoted verses of the Qur'an from all these books are collected and compiled, even then the whole Qur'an can be compiled from just those references.
7. The academic form of Arabic never changed and can be understood with ease even today. This helped preserve the original language of the Qur'an, in turn supporting the preservation of the Qur'an itself.
8. God protected the Qur'an by sending fresh revelation in its support through Mujaddidin (Reformers) and other chosen ones (5).

Adding to the 8th point, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (ra) notes that in the Latter Days, when irreligiousness has reached its climax, God sent Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as), who through his writings, has purified the Qur'an from all incorrect interpretations and commentaries and presented it to the world in its purest form. Hence, in this manner, God has ensured that the Qur'an is preserved both in its script and in its true meanings and message.

What is more, the Holy Qur'an itself alludes to how much care was taken in the way it was revealed in order to ensure its purity. For instance, God says that the Qur'an was revealed at a slow pace so that the Holy Prophet (sa) and his companions could learn it methodically and thoroughly without rushing through it: "And the Qur'an We have revealed in pieces that thou mayest read it to mankind at intervals, and We have sent it down piecemeal" (6).



The Holy Qur'an is divided into 114 Surahs or Chapters and each Chapter consists of individual Ayaat or verses. There are in total 6,348 verses in the Holy Qur'an.

This fact is corroborated by history as it is known that the Qur'an was revealed over a period of 22 and a half years which ensured the safe delivery of the message from God to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) and from the Prophet (sa) to his companions. This prevented it from being forgotten as there was plenty of time to memorize and then revise the memorization of the Qur'an in small, manageable portions. Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad (ra) has noted that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) spent 7,970 days as a Prophet, while the number of verses in the Qur'an is 6,236 and the number of words in the Qur'an is 77,934. This means that on average, every verse of the Qur'an has 12 words, while the average daily revelation of the Qur'an is only 9 words (7). In other words, the Qur'an was revealed so slowly that on average, even a full verse was not revealed on a daily basis.

Some critics of Islam may allege that the Qur'an should have been revealed all at once and cast doubt on the reasoning behind its slower revelation. This allegation was made during the time of the Holy Prophet (sa) as well and the Holy Qur'an addresses it as follows: "And those who disbelieve say: 'Why was not the Qur'an revealed to him all at once?' We have revealed it thus that We may strengthen thy heart therewith. And We have arranged it in the best form" (8).

In the commentary of this verse, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, and Mahdi (as) writes: "The disbelievers say, 'Why was the Qur'an not revealed once?' [God says] This is how it should have been so that We may strengthen your heart from time to time. This was also so that Divine knowledge and other kinds of knowledge are taught at their own time,

appropriately. This is because it is harder to understand something before its time. With this wisdom, God revealed the Holy Qur'an over 23 years so that the prophecies are also fulfilled during this time" (9).



Figure 1: An image of the Birmingham Qur'an manuscript. These pages, discovered in 2015, were carbon-dated from approximately 568CE to 645CE, which leaves open the possibility that this manuscript is from the time of the Holy Prophet(sa). As they are identical to present-day copies of the Qur'an, this is further evidence that the Qur'an has been preserved in its original words.

The scribes of the Holy Qur'an

Among the various precautions taken for the preservation of the Qur'an, let us have a closer look at just one: the writing down of the Qur'an. There were many companions of the Holy Prophet (sa) who had the responsibility of writing down the revelation of the Holy Qur'an. It is narrated that: "Whenever a verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet (sa) would call one of the scribes" (10).

This indicates that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) had several scribes available to him. Quoting from Fathul Bari (Victory of the Creator: Commentary of Sahih al-Bukhari), Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad(ra) gives a list of 15 scribes (11), the foremost of whom was Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit (ra).

Maulana Ahsanullah Danish, a scholar of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, who consulted various historical books that contain the names of the scribes, concludes that there were 28 companions who wrote down the Qur'an specifically during the time of the Holy Prophet (sa), and he has also noted that some researchers have placed the number as high as 40 companions (12). All this research shows that those companions of the Holy Prophet (sa) who

were literate loved to write down verses of the Holy Qur'an and this happened from the earliest of days, and it was common practice for companions to have some written portions of the Qur'an with them.

Even if only those manuscripts with parts of the Qur'an written on them were put together, complete copies of the Qur'an could be produced from them. In addition, some companions had written down the Qur'an in its entirety as shown by the following narrations:

Narrated Qatada: "I asked Anas bin Malik (ra): "Who collected the Qur'an at the time of the Prophet (sa)?" He replied, "Four, all of whom were from the Ansar: Ubayy bin Ka'b, Mu'adh bin Jabal, Zaid bin Thabit, and Abu Zaid" (13). Narrated Anas bin Malik (ra): "When the Prophet (sa) died, none had collected the Qur'an but four persons: Abu Ad-Darda', Mu'adh bin Jabal, Zaid bin Thabit, and Abu Zaid" (14).

Based on these two narrations, it can be determined that from the tribe of Hazrat Anas (ra) alone there were 5 people from the Ansar who had written down the Qur'an in its entirety during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa).

The first single-volume manuscript of the Qur'an

Based on his research on the compilation of the Qur'an, Maulana Ahsanullah Danish sahib writes that while it is true that the Qur'an had been written down in its entirety by the companions, the Qur'an did not exist in the form of a hardbound book or a single volume (as it does today) during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (sa) (15). This is why, during the Khilafat of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), when the battle of Yamama took place in which 500 reciters of the Qur'an were martyred, Hazrat 'Umar (ra) suggested to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) that the Qur'an should be compiled into the form of a single volume (16). This incident is described at length in Sahih Bukhari (Kitabul Fadha'il, i.e., Book Pertaining To The Merits Of The Companions) and mentions how Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) had reservations at the beginning because such a task of putting the Qur'an into a single volume was never done during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (sa). Eventually, he realized the necessity of this undertaking and assigned Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit (ra) to this task. This was because Hazrat Zaid (ra) was the most trusted and prominent scribe of the Qur'an during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (sa) (17).

Some critics allege that this was the first attempt to write down the text of the Qur'an, as Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra)

apparently stated that this had never been done during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (sa). However, this allegation is born out of a poor understanding of the actual narration in Arabic. Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (ra) points out that the words which Hazrat Umar (ra) spoke to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) were: "I suggest that you order the collection of the Qur'an". In other words, he was not suggesting the *writing down* of the Qur'an. That had already been done. He was suggesting the collection of the Qur'an into a single, complete volume. Similarly, when Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) called Hazrat Zaid (ra), he said to him "*ijma'hu*," meaning that he should collect it in one place. He did not tell him to write it down, as if for the first time. Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (ra) concludes by saying: "These words themselves demonstrate that at that time, the question in front of them was to collect the pages of the Qur'an into a single volume. They were not concerned about writing it down per se" (18).

Contrary to the way critics wish to portray this narration, it shows unequivocally the extent to which the companions strove to preserve the purity of the Qur'anic text. Prior to the time of the narration, the Qur'an had already been written down in its entirety by several companions, it had been memorized in its entirety by several companions, and it was being recited, memorized, studied, discussed, and quoted frequently. The companions still wished to go a step further and have the Qur'an put together into a single volume. What remarkable, sincere service to the Holy Qur'an! Is it still possible to assume that the Qur'an was corrupted considering such evidence to the contrary? Furthermore, the reason why this single-volume manuscript could not be prepared during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) is that the Qur'an was being revealed to him constantly and it was not possible to know if the revelation of the Qur'an had ended. However, when he passed away, it was understood that the Qur'anic revelation had come to an end and the Qur'an could be collected into a single book form.

In a remarkable book on the compilation, arrangement, and revelation of the Qur'an, "*Al-Itqan fi 'ulumil Qur'an*" (Introduction to the critical study of the Qur'an), Hazrat Imam Jalaluddin Sayyuti (rh) writes about the painstaking precautions that were taken to put together this first volume of the Qur'an. He writes that in light of the traditions, it should be understood that Hazrat Zaid (ra) was himself a Hafiz (one who has memorized the Qur'an in full) but he still sought other witnesses to each verse, both in written and memorized form, before adding it to the single volume or "*mashaf*" of the Qur'an that he was asked to

prepare. Imam Jalaluddin (rh) says: "Abu Da'ud narrates that Abu Bakr (ra) said to 'Umar (ra) and Zaid (ra): "Sit at the entrance to the Mosque and whoever comes to you with any portion from the book of Allah [i.e., the Holy Qur'an] with the support of two witnesses, write it down". Ibn Hijr says that the two witnesses refer to two formats, that is, through memorization and in writing. Sakhawi writes in his book *Jamalul-Qurra'* (Beauties of the Qur'an), "This means that two witnesses should give testimony that it was written down in front of the Holy Prophet (sa)." Abu Shama says, "It was their intention that the Qur'an is written down in the same words that were written down in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa), and not just based on memory" (19).

Based on these numerous narrations, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (ra) writes that for every single verse of the Qur'an, both the memorized verse and a written format of that verse were asked for before it was included in the "mashaf" (a codex or collection of sheets) of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra). What is more is that for most of the Qur'anic verses, there were dozens or even hundreds of witnesses who said that they learned the verse from the Holy Prophet (sa) directly. Many verses even had thousands of witnesses (20). The final volume that was produced out of this monumental exercise is called "mashaf-e-umm" (Mother of Collection) and no companions posed any objection to the accuracy of this manuscript of the Qur'an.

Standardized Copy of the Qur'an

During the time of Hazrat Uthman (ra), copies of this mashaf-e-umm were made and distributed to different Muslim lands as official, standardized copies of the Qur'an. This was because he started receiving complaints that different tribes enunciated or pronounced words of the Qur'an in distinctive ways and so Hazrat Uthman (ra) forbade all variations of enunciation of even vowel points and sent a standard copy to be recited in the standard way. This standard form of recitation or pronunciation of words was based on the dialect of the Holy Prophet (sa) or the dialect of the Quresh of Mecca. In Arabic, this is called *Qira'ah* and the closest analogy for English speakers to understand the difference between *Qira'at* (plural of *Qira'ah*) is to think of the difference between American English and British English in terms of pronunciation. Since Arabic is a much more diverse language as compared to English, this difference in dialects becomes much more profound and distinctive among Arabic speakers. Hence, Hazrat Uthman (ra) responded to this challenge of differences in pronunciation by standardizing the written copy of the Qur'an along with its mode of recitation. As an

added precaution, he ordered the burning of all other written manuscripts of the Qur'an, whether they were complete or only had portions of the Qur'an written on them. Since a colossal effort had already been made to prepare the mashaf-e-umm, there was no need to keep any other manuscripts of any other shape or form. One of the concerns of keeping such manuscripts was that some companions took personal notes on their manuscripts which might have led to confusion or ambiguity for later readers: they may have wondered which part is the Qur'an and which part is a footnote or a side note.

The Manuscript of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra)

Some critics of Islam raise an objection at this point that Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) did not consider Surah Al-Fatiha and the Mu'awwidhatain (the last two chapters of the Holy Qur'an) as part of the original text of the whole Qur'an, causing his hypothetical manuscript to be made up of 111 chapters instead of 114 chapters. We call it hypothetical because he never compiled an official manuscript as opposed to mashaf-e-umm and never declared or formally announced that his manuscript should be considered a standard instead of any other manuscript. Regardless, it is indeed true that some narrations mention this opinion of Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) that he did not wish to include these three chapters in his manuscripts of the Qur'an. For instance, it is narrated in Masnad Ahmad bin Hanbal as follows: "It is narrated by 'Abdur Rahman bin Yazid that Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) used to erase the Mu'awwidhatain from his manuscripts and used to say, "They are not from the book of Allah [i.e., the Holy Qur'an]". One narrator, A'mish, narrates that 'Asim narrates from Zirr, who in turn narrates from Hazrat Ubayy bin Ka'b (ra) [who said] "We asked the Holy Prophet (sa) about them [i.e., Mu'awwidhatain], and he said, 'This is how I have been commanded', and so I convey [this to others]" (21).

A similar narration appears in Sahih Bukhari: "Zirr bin Hubaish narrates, 'I asked Ubayy bin Ka'b (ra), 'O Abul Mundhir! Your brother, Ibn Mas'ud (ra) said so-and-so [i.e., the Mu'awwidhatain do not belong to the Qur'an]. Ubayy (ra) said, "I asked the Holy Prophet (sa) about them, and he said, 'They have been revealed to me, and I have recited them (as a part of the Qur'an).'" Ubayy (ra) added, 'So, we say according to what the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) said'" (22).

First, it must be clear from these narrations that Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) is only expressing an opinion about the last two chapters of the Qur'an. Other narrations mention that he thought these were merely prayers

revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) in order to seek protection from Allah on behalf of his grandsons, Hazrat Imam Hassan (ra) and Hazrat Imam Hussain (ra). Commenting on similar objections about Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra), Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as) writes: "These ignorant people say that Ibn Mas'ud (ra) requested a prayer duel, which means that it is permissible for Muslims to do prayer duels. However, they cannot prove that Ibn Mas'ud (ra) did not retract his opinion, and they also cannot prove that a prayer duel took place resulting in Divine punishment for those in error. The truth is that Ibn Mas'ud (ra) was an ordinary person, not a Prophet or Messenger. If he made a mistake out of passion, does that mean that we should consider his statement part of 'It is nothing but the pure revelation that has been revealed by God'? (23, 24)

The Promised Messiah (as) is arguing here that no matter what the case, the status of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) is not so high that we should consider him immune from errors in judgment. His words and statements do not have the same status as the words of the Holy Prophet (sa) regarding whom it is clearly stated in the Qur'an that what he said for religious guidance was a pure revelation from God. At the same time, there is absolutely no doubt that he was a great teacher of the Holy Qur'an and one of the most revered companions, and among the earliest converts to Islam, and every Muslim must respect him. A simple error in judgment about three of the chapters of the Holy Qur'an does not diminish his high status in the eyes of any Muslim. Our prayer for him has always been and continues to be: "Radhi-Allahu 'anhu" (May Allah be pleased with him!).

Second, the narrations themselves clearly refute the error of Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) as Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Ubayy (ra), another revered teacher of the Qur'an, is reported to have checked with the Holy Prophet (sa) about the Mu'awwidhatain and he told him that they were part of the Qur'an. There are many other well-authenticated Ahadith that quote the Holy Prophet (sa) as clearly stating that Surah Al-Fatiha and the Mu'awwidhatain are part of the Holy Qur'an and not separate from it. An interesting point is that other narrations state that Ibn Mas'ud (ra) did not include the Mu'awwidhatain in his manuscript, or that they were missing from the manuscript of Ibn Mas'ud (ra), but these narrations do not record his statement that they are not a part of the book of Allah. This is a subtle difference which means that there is some confusion as to the real reason why Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) did not include these two chapters in his manuscript. It may have been the opinion of Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) or it may have been the opinion of the person narrating this about him. In either case, these are just their opinions which are clearly refuted in these narrations as well as many other narrations from authentic sources. As Maulana Ahsanullah Danish sahib puts it, on the one hand, we have the opinion of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) supported by historical evidence, the united opinion of the entire ummah

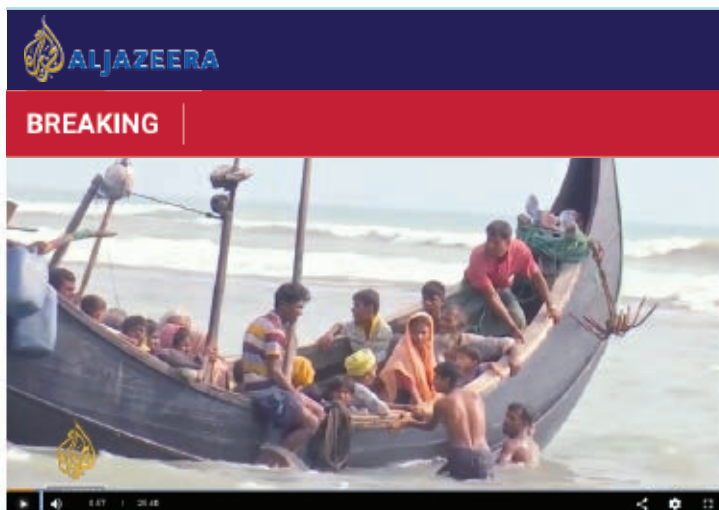
[Nation], the united opinion of the memorizers or huffaz of the Qur'an, and on the other hand, there is the opinion of the person narrating this from Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) or perhaps the opinion of Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (ra) himself. What does our rational mind tell us (25)? Accept the doubt of one or two people or the clear-cut statements of the Holy Prophet (sa) that plainly state that both Surah Al-Fatiha and the Mu'awwidhatain are part of the revealed Holy Qur'an?

In conclusion, it can be said that the evidence for the excellent preservation of the text of the Holy Qur'an is quite extensive. A recent discovery (in 2015) of a manuscript of the Qur'an gives further evidence for this. It was found at the University of Birmingham and scholars have said that it is perhaps the oldest manuscript of the Qur'an in the world. It dates from the period of 568 CE to 645 CE which makes it a possible manuscript from the time of the Holy Prophet (sa) (26). It contains parts of chapters 18 to 20 of the Holy Qur'an and a comparison with a present-day publication of the Qur'an reveals that they are identical, without any differences. Despite the convincing evidence presented, if some critics persist in objecting to the preservation of the Holy Qur'an, it can only be due to bias. An honest researcher in this field has no option but to affirm that the prediction of the Qur'an regarding its perfect preservation has indeed been fulfilled.

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NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS



Has the world forgotten about the Rohingya?

UNHCR urges more help for a million Rohingya refugees stuck in camps in Bangladesh.

UNHCR urges more help for a million Rohingya refugees stuck in camps in Bangladesh.

The UN is demanding international support for more than one million Rohingya refugees struggling to survive in camps in Bangladesh.

They were forced to leave their homes in Myanmar nearly five years ago when the military launched a crackdown against the mainly Muslim minority.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi is in Bangladesh to discuss helping the Rohingya return to Myanmar.

But talks have stalled since last year, when Myanmar's military took power in a coup.

With much of the world's attention on the Ukraine war, Grandi is urging people not to forget other humanitarian crises.

So what must be done to support the Rohingya?

So what must be done to support the Rohingya?

Presenter:
Mohammed Jamoom



Guests:
Imrul Islam
Advocacy Manager in Bangladesh,
Norwegian Refugee Council

Yasmin Ullah
Rohingya Social Justice Activist



Q: What is the beauty of the Holy Qur'an?



Questions & Answers

A: There is no verity that it does not mention and no misguided sect that it does not counter. And what a wonder it is that it does not contain a single sentence that is unnecessary, any statement out of place, or a single word of frivolity. Notwithstanding due regard to all these matters, it has displayed such a degree of fluency — more than which cannot be imagined. It has raised eloquence to the highest level of perfection by encompassing all past and future knowledge within a small book, by virtue of an excellent arrangement, brevity, and a closely reasoned discourse, so that man—whose life is short and whose works are many—may be relieved of many a headache, and so that its eloquence may benefit Islam in the dissemination of its doctrines, and it may be easy to memorize and remember it.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya IV, P. 283,
Edition 2016, Islam International Publications Ltd., UK

poetry CORNER

The Beneficence of the Glorious Qur'an, and Virtues of the Noble Qur'an



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Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Essence of Islam
Vol 1, P. 485-487, Third Edition (2007),
Islam International Publications Limited, UK

The Qur'an's glory and splendour is the light of every Muslim's soul;
The moon may be the favourite of others, our beloved is the Qur'an!

Its likeness cannot be seen in sight, we pondered much –
Why shouldn't it be unique? It is the pure Word of the Gracious.

An eternal spring manifests in every word of it;
No garden has such traits or an orchard like it there.

Surely, there is none like unto the pure Word of God;
It is a pearl from Oman, or else a ruby from Badakhshan.

How can the word of man be equal to the Word of God?
One is ineffectual, one is mighty, the difference is plain!

The light that we find in this Book
Will not ever exist in a thousand suns.

With it our heart and breast were purified,
Thus, He became a mirror unto His own Visage.

It gave the fruit of gnosis to the tree of the heart,
It cleansed every breast of doubts; it changed every heart.

With it the Visage of God became apparent,
The fear and craftiness of Satan became futile.



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DECLARATION OF INITIATION
أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah.
He is one and has no partner.
And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.
From this day the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in Islam at the presence of Masroor.
firm faith, that Hazrat Muhammad (peace & blessings of Allah be upon him)

On December 1st, 1888, the Promised Messiah (as) published an announcement that God had ordained him that whomsoever sought true faith and piety, should pledge allegiance to him so that Allah may shower His mercy and beneficence on them.

- 1 That till the last day of his life, he shall abstain from *shirk* (associating any partners with Allah).
- 2 That he shall keep away from falsehood, cruelty, adultery, dishonesty, disorder, rebellion and every kind of evil.
- 3 That he shall offer prayers (*Salat*) five times daily.
- 4 That he shall not inflict injury on any of Allah's creatures.
- 5 That he shall bear every hardship for the sake of Allah.
- 6 That he shall not follow vulgar customs, and shall guard against evil inclinations.
- 7 That he shall discard pride and haughtiness, live in humility & meekness
- 8 That he shall hold his faith, dignity, and the welfare of Islam dearer than his own life, wealth and children.
- 9 That he shall have sympathy for all of God's creatures, and devote his talents to their welfare.
- 10 That he shall establish brotherhood with him (i.e., Ahmad), obeying him in all good things, and firmly adhere to these rules until the last breath of his life.

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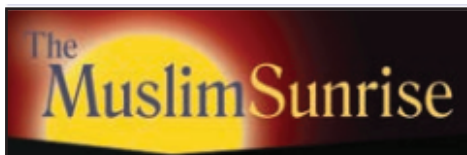
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